Joy & Sacrifice

JOY AND SACRIFICE.

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Heb.12:2 "Looking unto Jesus, the Captain and Perfector of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

INTRO. Easter a great day for us.
Last Sunday a great day.
Today we are honored to have as our guests the Vacaville Chapter of Eastern Star.

By what common experience can we unite these 3 occasions together in such a way as to carry us still still further in worship and fellowship together? On all 3 occasions many sacrificed in order to be present and all had a joyous good time for attending. Taking for our theme, Sacrifice and Joy, let us lokk to the Star of the First Magnitude in the heavens of human achievement for our light and inspiration. I need not tell you that Jesus Christ is that star.
Read text.

I. "For the joy that was set before Him".
1. What does this statement mean? Was Jesus thinking of himself-looking beyond the Cross of his sufferings to the time when he would sit at the right hand of God in glory? No! X suffered on Calvary out of pure love for mankind. He suffered and died for us all, for the saving of us from our sins.
"God so loved the world that he gave."
"Christ so loved that he suffered and sacrificed."

2. If this be true, what does the writer to the Hebrews mean by "joy" as used in thetext?
Must be more significance attached to the wrd than we ordinarily give it. It must con-

tain more than the popular meaning of it does, if it is the motive of the Passion of Christ.

3. Tagore, the poet and prophet of India, speaks of joy in his writings- God's joy as the motive and cause of the creation of the world. He says that joy belongs to the act of creation. It is both the motive and the satisfaction of creation.

Every worthy creative act leads to the experience of this joy.

Joy for us comes from the sense of active cooperation with the laws of God's world.

When we are in harmony with themind of God- thinking his thots after him and doing what we know he wants us to do- we are filled and thrilled with joy.

All good work well done rewards the doer with joy. Whether as artist or artisan, as poet or prophet, as skilled or unskilled, the doing or making of something that is right and good gives us joy.

The greater the difficulty we have in doing something worth while and themore we have to sacrifice in the doing of it the larger the measure of joy.

Had Lindberg?s baby been lost for just an h an hour, his return would have given the parents a thrill of joy, to be sure, but let that child now be placed in his mother's arms after all the anxiety and suffering and sacrifice that has been made the joy of the parents will know no bounds, and to it will be added the joy of narly all the world.

How much more, then, must the measure of X's joy be since his suffering and sacrifice involved the redemption of all mankind!

II. Nothing is done perfectly until it is done with joy. The interpretation of God in terms of

3.

Law and duty is not Christian interpretation. Not law and duty, but love and blessedness are the ideals which move the Xn. Unless the sacrifice we make for Xn living and service is joyous, it is not Xn. We cannot perform successfully any worthy task without experiencing a thrill of happy satisfaction which is far deeper than pleasure.

III. This joy is far different than pleasure.

1. When we think of pleasure, we think of freedom from pain. But as a matter of fact, every creative act of worthy achievement brings us not only pleasure, but pain as well.

We are told by experts who know that genius is 9/10s work. Well, work is 9/10s drudgery. Whether achievement be physical or mental, moral or spiritual it is accomplished only by paying the price in terms of weariness and worn-outness, pain and suffering. Noone achieves worthily without pouring into it his own heart's blood- his very life goes into it. And yet, and yet, there is in it the joy that ~~more~~ makes the effort more than worth while.

2. Xn joy is not the pleasure that banishes pain. It is of a much higher order. It is above both pleasure and pain, and includes both.

Xty is a belief and a life and a practice for heroes, for brave souls who dare to do, who die to live, who sacrifice to gain; Xty is not for good-natured, easy-going people who simply want to have a good time. An easy-going Xty does not build the Kingdom of God.

3. The greatest lesson which the passion of Jesus teaches us is that the acceptance of pain and suffering is the experience of God himself.

God does not live an easy life. The harmony of God has been bot at the price of the harshest discords. The great

The greater the work, the greater the pain- and the greater the joy, too.

Oh, if we could only realize that the spiritual achievement which Jesus makes possible includes both pleasure and pain; but it leads to a higher realization and brings with it our greatest joy. In the light of this truth the troubles of this world take on a different light.

"All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grevous: yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness."

4. The suffering of Christ on the Cross, what was it? Physical pain? No! no, as great as that was. It was the sins and follies of mankind. He was their true self, he was their true life. They were made by Godto reflect his divine beauty and goodness. Jesus Christ is our true self, and He suffers, is crucified and put to shame, when men and women are false to themselves. If we would only realize that our own follies and sins, our own squanderings and neglect of opportunities but addto the sufferings of the Christ who gave his life for us, how we would repent, and how differently we would live!

Conclusion: The text has for its context the long-distance relay race. Christ ran his race successfully to the very end. With fidelity and constancy, ~~filling/filling/fil/filled/fulfilled/filled~~ with light and purity, living his natural life in beauty and goodness, in terms of immortality, and with fervency and zeal The Star of the East, finished his course in glory. Let us take up the race and run our course with enduring courage! Let us run our race with patience, however sorrowful, yet always rejoucing, looking unbo Jesus the Author and finisher of our Faith and entering into the joy of our Lord, in whose presence is the fulness of joy. "These things have I spoken unto you (said Jesus) that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."